

Message Text

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ACTION ORM-02

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-11 ISO-00 DHA-02 SSO-00

NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

OMB-01 AID-05 FDRE-00 VO-03 SCA-01 INSE-00 TRSE-00

ABF-01 /089 W

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O P 261700Z JAN 76

FM USMISSION GENEVA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 7763

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY

USMISSION USUN PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L GENEVA 00538

ATHENS AND ROME FOR INS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF

SUBJECT: ASSYRIAN AND ARMENIAN REFUGEES IN LEBANON

REF; STATE 017490 (NOTAL)

1. MISOFF OCDE RENEWED APPROACH ON BYYALX OF ASSYRIAN AND ARMENIAN REFUGEES TO DEPUTY UNHCR AND DEPUTY DIRECTOR ASSISTANCE DIVISION JAN 26 ALONG LINES PRESENTED REFTEL. UNHCR SEIZED OF PROBLEM, IS FULLY SYMPATHETIC, AND INVESTIGATING POSSIBLE COURSES OF ACTION.

2. GENERAL PROBLEM WAS DISCUSSED DURING JAN 14 MEETING IN FRANKFURT WITH INS EUROPEAN DIRECTOR FALCHER, WHO STATED THAT FROM INS POINT OF VIEW BEST PROCESSING POINTS FOR GROUP WOULD BE EITHER GREECE, ITALY (ROME OR NAPLES), AUSTRIA OR GERMANY. HOWEVER, UNHCR, BEFORE APPROACHING
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GOVERNMENT OR GOVERNMENTS OF INTENDED SAFEHAVEN POINTS WILL

REQUIRE ASSURANCES OF SPONSORSHIP FROM COUNTRIES IN WHICH THE WILL BE RESETTLED. IN ADDITION TO U.S., UNHCR HAS IN MIND SPECIFICALLY SWEDEN, AUSTRALIA, AND CANADA WHICH HAVE ACCEPTED ASSYRIANS AND ARMENIANS IN THE PAST AND WHERE THEIR COMMUNITIES ARE ALREADY LOCATED. HOWEVER, IN ORDER TO START PROCESS IN MOTION, UNHCR CONSIDERS IT INDISPENSIBLE TO HAVE BEST ESTIMATE FROM US AS TO PART OF ASSYRIAN/ARMENIAN CASELOAD IT WOULD BE PREPARED TO ACCEPT. IN THIS REGARD, DEPT. MAY WISH CONSULT WITH INS IN ORDER TO ESTABLISH WHAT MEASURES NECESSARY TO ASSURE SPEEDY PROCESSING OF THIS GROUP OF REFUGEES AT WHICHEVER SAFEHAVEN POINTS ARE ESTABLISHED.

3. A SECOND PROBLEM CONFRONTING UNHCR IS IDENTIFICATION AND LISTING OF REFUGEES. IN ORDER RESOLVE THIS, THEY HAVE INSTRUCTED THEIR REP IN BEIRUT, JAHN, WHO LEFT TURKEY TODAY FOR LEBANON, TO MEET SOONEST WITH WCC REP DE JONGE WHO RETURNED TO BEIRUT FROM ATHENS TODAY. WCC OFFICE HERE ADVISES THAT 550 ARMENIANS FROM EASTERN EUROPE (PRESUMABLY INCLUDING 439 SHOWN ON OUR RECORDS AS ELIGIBLE USRP CASES IN BEIRUT AS OF END DECEMBER), 1,000 ASSYRIANS FROM IRAQ AND 450 ARMENIANS ALSO FROM IRAQ HAVE APPLIED FOR ENTRY INTO US. IN ADDITION, 1,000 STATELESS ASSYRIANS AND ARMENIANS ARE REGISTERED TO GO TO AUSTRALIA, CANADA AND SWEDEN. LATEST UNHCR STATISTICS ON SUBJECT TRANSMITTED GENEVA'S 0140. UNHCR HOPES TO HAVE MORE PRECISE FIGURES TO CLARIFY SITUATION IN NEAR FUTURE FROM JAHN. MEANWHILE WE WOULD APPRECIATE TELEGRAPHIC NOTIFICATION FROM INS ATHENS AS TO CASELOAD AND STATUS OF DOSSIERS IT NOW HAS ON THESE REFUGEES.

4. UNHCR ALSO TROUBLED OVER PROBLEM OF OBTAINING RETURN CLAUSE FROM LEBANESE GOVERNMENT UNDER EXISTING CIRCUMSTANCES, AND FEELS IT OUT OF QUESTION TO OBTAIN CLAUSE FROM ANY OF POTENTIAL SAFEHAVEN COUNTRIES. AS DEPARTMENT AWARE, THIS REQUIREMENT IS ALSO SUBJECT OF CURRENT DISCUSSION WITH INS AND WITH CONFIDENTIAL

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IRANIAN GOVERNMENT IN REGARD TO KURDISH REFUGEES.

5. RE PARA 4, FUNDING OF CARE AND MAINTENANCE IN SAFEHAVEN COUNTRY IS MATTER OF CONCERN TO UNHCR. IT IS PERMITTED TO UTILIZE ONLY \$500,000 FOR REFUGEE ASSISTANCE FROM ITS EMERGENCY FUND FOR ANY SINGLE GROUP IN A GIVEN YEAR. HOWEVER, WERE THIS TO BE APPLIED TO THE PRESENT GROUP, ASSUMING THEY NUMBER

APPROXIMATELY 2,000, AND ASSUMING A \$7.50 PER DAY COST OF MAINTENANCE, THIS AMOUNT WOULD BE EXPENDED IN JUST OVER ONE MONTH, WHICH, BASED ON PAST UNHCR EXPERIENCE, WOULD BE INADEQUATE TO PROCESS A GROUP OF THIS SIZE. BEYOND THAT TIME, IT WOULD BE FORCED TO SEEK FUNDS FROM OTHER SOURCES, LIKELY THROUGH AN APPEAL TO GOVERNMENTS WHOSE RESPONSE UNCERTAIN IN LIGHT OF CURRENT NUMBER OF SIMILAR APPEALS.

6. ON MATTER OF TRANSPORTATION COSTS, THERE IS NO INFORMATION HERE TO CONFIRM THAT WCC WOULD FUND THESE. IS IT DEPARTMENT'S UNDERSTANDING THAT WCC WILL PAY FOR TRANSPORTATION BOTH FROM BEIRUT TO SAFEHAVEN AND FROM SAFEHAVEN TO COUNTRY OF RESETTLEMENT?

7. ALTHOUGH SITUATION IN LEBANON HAS IMPROVED CONSIDERABLY IN RECENT DAYS, QUESTION ARISES AS TO PRACTICAL MEANS OF ASSEMBLING AND PROCESSING GROUPS IN EVENT OF RENEWED FIGHTING. RESUMED PRESENCE OF JAHN AND DE JONGE IN BEIRUT, OF COURSE, IMPROVES OUTLOOK IN THIS REGARD. ON OTHER HAND IF CEASE FIRE IN LEBANON HOLDS AND CONDITIONS IMPROVE GENERALLY, UNHCR QUESTIONS WHETHER CONSIDERATION MIGHT NOT BE GIVEN TO ARRANGEMENTS BEING MADE FOR MORE SPEEDIER PROCESSING THERE, RATHER THAN ESTABLISHING A MID-POINT SAFEHAVEN. WOULD WELCOME EMBASSY BEIRUT'S AND INS ATHENS OBSERVATIONS THIS POINT.

8. WOULD APPRECIATE DEPARTMENT'S REACTION FOREGOING AND ESTIMATE REQUESTED PARA 2 FOR RELAY TO UNHCR.DALE

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